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“The Adjacent Kingdom of England”: England, Scotland, and World War Two in the Poetry of Douglas Young (1913–1973)

« Le royaume voisin d’Angleterre » : l’Angleterre, l’Écosse et la Seconde Guerre mondiale dans l’œuvre politique et poétique de Douglas Young (1913-1973)

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"The Adjacent Kingdom of England": England, Scotland, and World War Two in the Poetry of Douglas Young (1913–1973)

Scottish poet, classicist and politician, Douglas Young died more than forty years ago in "exile" (Taylor, 1973, p. 8) in North Carolina, America. In the aftermath of the 1945 Labour landslide, Young's pro-independence Scottish nationalist stance was moved to the political margins, and Young took up a professorial post in North Carolina to return with fervour to the study and teaching of classics. It could be said his reputation as a poet, editor and major organ of the Scottish Literary Renaissance is equally in a state of exile, or at least in limbo, and that some of his ideas are still treated with suspicion, most recently in Gavin Bowd's 2013 work *Fascist Scotland: Caledonia and the Far Right*, to which we will return. Young is in many ways one of the last looming (both figuratively and physiologically, for he stood at over six foot six) poets and men of letters of the second wave of the Scottish Literary Renaissance, on whose poetry comparatively little critical work has been done. However, 2014 is scheduled as the year in which for the first time Young's poems and translations will be collected in a volume edited by Dr Emma Dymock. It may well be with the arrival of this book that attention turns to a re-assessment of Young's contribution to the cultural, literary and political landscape of Scotland.

Young's substantial body comprises poetry in Lallans, translations from and into over ten languages, translations of the plays of Aristophanes, a memoir, monographs on St Andrews (the university being his alma mater) and Scotland, and a whole raft of political pamphlets. Many of these pamphlets document Young's most symbolic act of defiance to the English government: his refusal of both military and industrial wartime conscription for the purposes of raising the topic of Scottish independence in courtroom tribunals. While Young's act of effective martyrdom for his cause was admired by many of his friends, it was also considered cavalier and unduly diverting attention at a time of international crisis. For instance David Murison writes that no matter how

"unpopular" Young's stand was, the Scottish nationalists even today "must recognise Douglas struck a brave blow for their cause" (Murison, 1974, p. 17). Young's problematic stance was perhaps most effectively summed up by Hamish Henderson who wrote in 1943 that

> As far as Scottish nationalism is concerned, I think the men of our Highland Division are doing more to solve Scotland's problems than Young languishing in clink […] But it's probably right that one or two martyrs should do us a favour—by suffering for not seeing the matter whole. (Neat, 2009, p. 60)

The crux of Young's point was that it was "*intra vires*" (Young, 1950, p. 57), in the view of the Treaty of Union 1707 having been repeatedly broken, for an "alien" government to suborn Scottish men for military service where they would be defending, as C. Day Lewis memorably claimed "the bad against the worse" (Mackay, 2011, p. 87). This act, amongst other opinions in Young's political work such as those which present England as the enemy "Other" may, as we shall see, explain his gradual marginalisation and need for recovery. Young's hostility towards the English government is often expressed in his letters in sweeping terms such as "England", "London" or in the phrase Norman MacCaig admired, "the adjacent kingdom of England" (Hendry, 2010, p. 205). However, his stance of resistance to government in England was far from unique, aberrant and isolationist, as a glance at many of the private letters of writers, intellectuals and poets of the time reveal varying degrees of, if not arrant enmity, then clear suspicion towards England.

Even in the diaries for Mass Observation of a friend of Young's and a writer who spent much of her life campaigning for community integration, we see Naomi Mitchison also expressing aversion to England. While Joy Hendry praises Mitchison's work as pointing a way towards an "integrated, wholesome, fulfilling future" (Hendry, 1989, p. 299), her wartime memoirs *Among You Taking Notes* cast London often as an infernal place, synonymous with Churchill who she longs to see the back of "before the peace" (Mitchison, 1986, p. 118). Crucially in Mitchison's diary, and in her earlier treatise *The Moral Basis of Politics* (1938), she makes the distinction between chauvinism in the form Imperialist nationalism, which represents big business and conservative hanging on to its own interests, and the constructivist "nationalism of those who desire a change" (Mitchison, 1938, p. 64). This form of nationalism does not lead to war as "it does not want to conquer other nations. It wants to develop its own" and this ideal, shared with Young, is "not incompatible with internationalism or peace" (Mitchison, 1986, p. 79).

From Hugh MacDiarmid's extreme casting of the French and English bourgeoisie as "a far greater enemy" (Bold, 1984, p. 611) to the early and impetuous writings of Norman MacLean and George Campbell Hay which call for the suffering of England, or the exhaustion of England and its imperialist superstructure through war, we see the traditional binaries of what is good and bad being deeply problematized through an effective finger-pointing exercise in who the enemy is. For instance, MacLean writes to MacDiarmid in 1941 to say that "I see my little part merely as one that contributes to the mutual exhaustion of the German and British Empires" (Manson, 2011, p. 304). Hay's letters of the period are even more pugnacious in tone, saying that "the London lot […] took for themselves every resource, richness, honour and glory that belonged to the three kingdoms, so now let them have every bomb, bullet and explosive" (Byrne, 2000, p. 26). Hay's proposed antidote to the "enemy" who "is between here and the channel […] is pure nationalism" (Byrne, 2000, p. 23). These opinions were written at a time when Hay was on the run from military conscription and perhaps Young's stand of non-compliance with this "enemy" could be viewed as an act of "pure nationalism", but an act of nationalism that is only relevant and understood within the unprecedented context of the war.

This is particularly noteworthy considering that many of the combatant poets such as Hamish Henderson, MacLean and Hay would find their notions of the "enemy" completely shaken by their war experience. Although Young was often erroneously considered a pacifist, he believed in the necessity of the war against fascism whilst taking part in an individual's war of Scottish nationalism against English imperialism. Young's fight often looked back into history, to times when England had been thought of as the old enemy, aligning his wartime struggle against the law and authority of an "alien" government with that of William Wallace. Young's many pamphlets, such as *William Wallace and THIS War* (1943) and *Quislings in Scotland* (1942), can be seen as one strand of this fight, but his poetry cannot be severed from the propagandistic drive of these pamphlets. For instance, poems such as "After Lunch, Ekali", "For a Scotsman Slain" and "For Alasdair" are written in a highly polemical and often boldly rhetorical language, a language that is in itself a politicised entity. In his treatise on the use of Lallans, or rejuvenated Scots for literary purposes, *Plastic Scots* (1946), Young makes the point that the use of new forms of language, or old languages made new, is an act of making "history" and that it belongs to poetry, "the most intense and memorable form of linguistic expression" (Young, 1946, p. 31). Therefore, while literary theorist Roman Jakobson has devised ways of assessing the "literariness" of any text over its other functions/purposes, we must remember that the

language in which Young writes his poetry is deeply engaged with outside social, political and historical issues, and cannot as such be claimed to be purely poetry or purely propaganda. By this token, we must also consider that any pronouncements such a poetry makes can be made within the context of the poem, as tropes, symbols or leitmotifs. The aim of looking at these poems, and referring back at times to Young's pamphlets, is to explore Young's relationship with the "adjacent kingdom of England" as an entity of malevolent otherness used to further his nationalist commitment for independence but also a crucial development in his poetic life. At the same time, it is necessary to challenge the notion that Young's poetry tries to undermine or downplay the threat of fascism, for some of his poems are marked by a moral abhorrence at the events unfolding in Germany at the time.

In an unusually fulsome introduction to Young's first collection of verse, *Auntran Blads* (1943), Hugh MacDiarmid clearly presents Young as a worthy dauphin of the Scottish Literary Renaissance movement, admiring the synergy in his work between politics, intellect and poetry. MacDiarmid sees Young as a man of enormous commitment, devoted to reclaiming "elements which had been more or less lost in the process of assimilation to English standards to which Scotland has been subject since the Union" (MacDiarmid, 1943, p. 5). MacDiarmid praises Young's "literary and political leadership" and his "intellectual position (pedantic position, if you will)" and sees Young's poetry as vitally conjoined "to practical political activity" which "seems likely to bridge the appalling gulf between Poetry and the People which has yawned ever wider during the past century" (MacDiarmid, 1943, p. 5).

We can see something of this democratic intellect at work in one of Young's most anthologised war poems, an elegy for an erstwhile student "Alasdair", who was killed fighting in the Libyan desert. Here, Young seems most concerned with the loss of potential, of the student who represents the future dying in war and the teacher, the speaker of the poem, living to write the elegy. In many ways, the attitude of the poem is similar to that of the survivor guilt in Alexander Scott's most famous war poem "Coronach", where the poet must thole the suffering and somehow continue to make art and meaning out of loss. In the nadir of its despair, the poem is a call to action:

> Waement the died, I never did,
> But nou I am safe awa
> I hear their wae
> Greetan greetan dark and daw-
> Their weird to sing, my weird to dae. (Scott, 2014, pp. 167–8)

Similarly in Young's "For Alasdiar", the prostrate nature of anguish in the poem is almost a challenge, or a source of strength, that the issue of freedom has become one of life or death, and how can a country allow its people to die so far from home:

> Hauldan the Germans awa frae the Suez Canal,
> Ye dee'd. Suld this be Scotland's pride, or shame?
> Siccar it is, your gallant kindly saul
> Maun lea thon land and tak the laigh road hame.
> The spate rins drumlie and broun,
> Whummlan aathing doun. (Young, 1943, p. 21)

The "laigh road" here is the one that leads to Scotland, although Young occupies the high road, it is Alasdair who, having fallen for Scotland in Libya, is immediately back in Scotland, in everything Young sees, including a river that seems to drown everything. Young's ambivalence in this poem does not come from a consideration of Alasdair's loss of life to fight fascism, but from the fact that the "shame" might be that Scotland is not fighting independently of England. Young makes it clear in his translation of George Campbell Hay that Scotland is paying heavily in young lives to further the imperialism of Britain: "Sair the price maun be dounpitten / By the island-fowk for the greatness o Britain." (Young, 1943, p. 21)

Some of Young's poems in *Auntran Blads* are concerned with the war and assess it in terms of binary opposition with an enemy and the cost Scotland must pay for "the adjacent kingdom of England" (Hendry, 2011, p. 205). In his second and final collection, *A Braid o Thristles* (1947), the threat of the war becomes retrospective and seen through Young's own recollections, although Young's nationalist ardour remains undimmed. In "For a Scotsman Slain" we see how Young's poetry of this period can at times resign itself to a form of "lament syndrome". The first quatrain is celebratory, the second is threnodic, yet the loss it conveys is almost choking:

> In England's hour o need
> He quit his greitan bride,
> Wi youthful virr and pride
> Gaed aff and focht and dee'd.
>
> Sick wi despair and grame
> Tuin day follows day.
> A a we do or say
> Canna bring him hame. (Young, 1943, p. 22)

This poem seems to hark back to the balladic responses of poets for lost soldiers of previous conflicts and reads almost like the death, or at least darkening, of Kailyard writing when confronted with World War One. The poem seems to be about much more than the death of a Scotsman: it mourns the death of a way of life. It does not seem to explicitly blame England, for the Scotsman dies helping the nation in its "hour o need". More than anything, this poem serves to dramatise the disruptive effects war and death-in-war have on the creative mind, and question the hegemonic responses we are supposed to have for the death of men in times of war. As such, it is as confrontational and radical as that of Hugh MacDiarmid's "At the Cenotaph", published a decade before Young's poem. Standing at the Cenotaph, MacDiarmid's speaker asks us:

> Are the living so much use
> That we need to mourn the dead?
> Or would it yield better results
> To reverse their roles instead? (MacDiarmid, 1935, p. 26)

It is often wrongly assumed that MacDiarmid is attacking both national modes of grieving and the sacrifices of world wars. The message of this poem is a positive and regenerative one stating that these men have fallen so that we can and must change the social inequality of the country we live in. The argument of the poem is that, if we were forced instead to mourn the living poor and oppressed of our country, we would never be at peace, we would not have our mourning limited to set days and ceremonies, it would instead be incessant and omnipresent until something was done to change it. This call for a radically reformist type of peace is underscored by Young in his 1943 poem "Dulce et Decorum …" where he blames those that plough so much of the public purse into erecting gaudy tributes to the dead as the living continue to suffer:

> D'ye see thon muckle black angel o Cupar,
> A buirdly queyn wi muckle black wings,
> Standan thunder on a pedestal aside the Fluithers,
> To commemorate the laddies and their wasteit lives?
>
> Dod, the sicht o't fair pits ye in a stupor.
> They micht hae spent their pennies on a hantle ither things,
> Thae profiteeran fermers and lairdies, and the mithers
> Greitan for their sons, and the widdawt wives.
>
> They're geyan orra fowk the buddies o Fife,
> Mair keen to pit out siller on daith nor on life. (Young, 1943, p. 22)

The sharp envoi of this poem puts the image into perspective, that the town's folk are more willing to bring out their "siller" in death than in life. While Young's language and rhyme scheme may seem at times wooden and antiquated, it shows potently that both Young's politics and poetics fluctuate between the deeply revolutionary and reactionary. Therefore we find in Young, particularly in his pamphlets which are contemporaneous with the poems in this article, both a radical desire for change, that "after a prolonged coma, Scotland is waking up, and the Renaissance in Lallans is … one manifestation of this process" (Young, 1947, p. 33). Yet this is marred, as Bill Finlay has detected, by a largely rhetorical enmity towards any form of English influence and a retreat into historical battles, lexis and tropes.

In "Dulce et Decorum…" we see Young denouncing the "profiteeran fermers and lairdies" and although in many of MacDiarmid's poems of this period he attacks English imperialism, Young's real enemies seem to be more like local grandees and "nabobs". Similarly in "For the Old Highlands" he castigates the "chiefs whose passioned greed and blindness / made desolate these lovely lonely places". Young even appropriates the eponymous term for Nazi defection, "Quisling", to apply to men and women in Scotland who he sees as being "opposed to the national independence and prosperity of the Scots nation" (Young, 1942, p. 1). Young sees his poetry and writing as an act of "patriotic duty" even though it risks, as Gavin Bowd has claimed, "downplaying … the fascist threat" (Bowd, 2013, p. 131). After a wartime police raid on Young's home for seditious material, Young said that "there is nothing subversive to be found here, nothing that would injure the war effort" (Bowd, 2013, p. 167) and it was not Young's intention to downplay the military priority of a war against fascism. Instead he wanted to wage an internal war of liberty, bolstered by rhetoric, tracts and poetry, even if this meant a losing battle, an act of martyrdom that serves to highlight issues of self-government, rather than submit mechanically to the priorities of war. When we consider that under the leadership of Young, the Scottish National Party was most interested in the "reconquest of Scotland" (Bowd, 2013, p. 177) we begin to see that Young's "auld enemy" argument is something of a pose, designed to ignite feelings of Scottish independence and its post-War potential, over demonising England and calling for its ruin.

Many of Douglas Young's poems of this period exist primarily to rally and exhort nationalist fervour, but his second and final collection *A Braird o Thristles* would contain a mixture of poems written from a nationalist agenda and more personal reflections on the war. Some of Young's contemporaries argue that he contributed more to literary, cultural and intellectual Scotland as a teacher and a propagandist than as a poet. Maurice

Lindsay claimed that a combination of Young's political and educational commitments and multi-talents meant that he could never "exploit" his gift for poetry "to the full" (Lindsay, 1983, p. 89). In the 1974 memorial volume for Douglas Young, the impression given was one of a late elder statesman who had fought for Scotland but died effectively in exile and irrelevance in America, a man who had "left no one great monument behind him" (D.S.C-R, 1976, online). Young, in his own entry as a promising young man of letters for a 1947 article in *The New Alliance and Scots Review*, writes presciently that "Scotland is strangely indifferent to her men of talent—she let Edwin Muir go and Young sometimes talks of going to the States" (Young, 1947, p. 10). Less than thirty years later, David Murison would write that "it is tragic that in his last years Scotland found so little use for his many talents that he had to spend much of his time outwith this country" (Murison, 1974, p. 21).

The very nature of the 1945 Labour landslide pushed Young into exile and his political beliefs and ideals out of the spotlight. Young, in his most overtly nationalist poetry, enunciates the aspirations of peace for post-War Scotland, but there are elements of heavy rhetoric to Young's style, as if he envisages a Utopian Scotland that would never become a reality. It is as if his nationalist fervour and exuberance for a new Scotland was never as thoroughly shaken or interrogated as that of his combatant contemporaries, as we can see in this idealistic poem, "Scotland, Awauk". The song-like or oral quality of this poem suggests a link with the folk-song work of Hamish Henderson, that perhaps Young intended this poem anthemically:

> Scotland, awauk, be agin a nation
> Win back your wealth and yur libertie
> Shake aff the chains o' the dominion
> O London toun and its usurie.
> Tak in your hands your ain salvation
> And be aince mair rich, proud and free.
>
> […]
>
> Five million fowk, frae the desolation
> O Lawland slum and Hieland muir
> Tae rule your sels is the ane foundation
> O wealth for aa. Why are ye puir?
> Your hairns and haunds can rebigg the nation
> Scotland's your hope, your hope is sure. (Young, 1943, p. 2)

While there is no doubting the seriousness of Young's calls in his poetry and pamphlets for a new nationalist and separatist Scotland, it is clear these ideals remained in the realms of the unrealised. For instance,

in *William Wallace and This War*, Young aligns his litigious struggles with refusal of conscription to the fight for liberty spearheaded by William Wallace seven centuries before. However, Young refers to soldiers as "warriors" in a dangerously romanticising way and criticises how the defence of Scotland has been left to "a polyglot and heterogeneous influx of Poles, Czechs, Anglo Saxons, Negroes and other *species*" (Young, 1943, p. 8). In another chronicle of his on-going battles with the Scottish law courts, *The Free Minded Scot*, in the heights of rhetoric he admits more than a conspicuous streak of racism that while Scots are being transported for war labour down to the South of England, "Scotland is invaded by a swarm of miscellaneous foreigners making themselves at home" (Young, 1942, p. 5).

The crucial difference between this passage and the previous one is that Young makes the grave mistake of moving the blame from that of an oppressive, London-centric government, to that of the homeless and displaced of the war seeking refuge in Scotland. This view runs counter to the beliefs of nearly all of the other poets of Young's generation. Even in pamphlets designed to inspire Nationalist zeal, Young posits himself as a critic of imperialist government while simultaneously using deeply imperialist language in order to describe his plans or vision for Scotland. In *The Re-Colonisation of Scotland* he states that "we can build an economy and a culture in Scotland which will be a model for the world" (Young, 1946, p. 7). Although Young's more nationalist verse in his second collection is intensely felt, it does seem somewhat oratorical, given the post-war depression and need for physical, not merely verbal, action. Most interestingly in "Aisling Na H-Alba", which is Gaelic for "A Dream for Scotland", there is a subtle undertone to the poem that acknowledges the dreaminess of Young's ideals and can read poignantly as an exilic poem, of tireless yearning:

> How shall we adore thee, Scotland, our mother and bride,
> When we, thy lovers, are thy masters, in patriot zeal and pride?
> Sorely have they defaced thee, the boors that have held thee in thrall,
> Entombed thee in slums of cities with squalor and smoke for a pall,
> Defiled thee with hideous churches and shops upon every side,
> Smothered thee foully in ragweed and bracken over all.
>
> The day of our future shall come, when we shall ourselves decide.
> Sweet springing pastures we'll give thee, and crops upon every side,
> Fair buildings and fairer people and life fairly planned,
> Temples of art and science and music on every hand.
> Such be our masterful zeal and such our patriot pride,
> So adoring and adorning our bountiful motherland. (Young, 1947, p. 30)

Young repeatedly states that his purpose is to offer guidance for Scotland when it wakes from a prolonged coma or slumber. Here, and in other poems, Young envisages a new Scotland in ethnically or hereditarily pure terms that go in hand with a Hellenic and intellectual overhaul of the country. Even the language of the above poem, "Aisling Na H-Alba", is not forward looking but curiously archaic and shrouded in Celtic mists. In many of Young's poems and pamphlets there is a heavy element of showmanship, as if Young is taking his fight for freedom to the dramatic heights of a show trial. Given that Young's pro-independence message pervades all of his literary output and all of his energies during the war, these acts cannot be seem simply as exhibitionism, they are deliberately dramatic attempts to wake his fellow countrymen into a new awareness.

Young was certainly the most vocal campaigner of his generation for non-conscription on nationalist grounds. Compton Mackenzie, in his essay from the volume *On Moral Courage*, cites Young as a man who has "moral courage" in abundance, arguing that "one of the hardest tests of a man's moral courage is his ability to face disapproval even of his friends for an action which strikes at all the traditions of his class but which nevertheless he feels compelled to take in order to be at ease with his own conscience" (Mackenzie, 1962, p. 139). From his beginnings "an aura of apodietic certitude hung over him" (Young, 1947, p. 10) and the issue of refusal of conscription, leading to the arguments for self-government, was one of such importance to Young, he divisively described it as being of greater importance than "the incidence of infant mortality" (Young, 1950, p. 56). This helps to give us some sense of both Young's contrarian nature, and the profundity of his commitment to a cause and his conviction.

Any misconceived idea that Young's attacks on England belied a secret sympathy with Nazism can be decisively gainsaid by one of his finest war poems "After Lunch, Ekali". This poem is set on the very brink of the war, after hearing Hitler's bellicose announcements on the radio on 1st September 1939. The poem takes place in the hot and fractious environment of a holiday in Ekali, where any idea of escapism is ruined with the announcement of war. Like George Campbell Hay's "Esta Selva Selvaggia" it deals with elements of purgatory in the melting pot of languages that are swirling around in the netherworld of a global war. However, Young's poem captures the exact moment the gulf opens up between him and his hosts and the poem envisages Young's coming struggle for self-government. After spending a pleasant afternoon with his hosts:

> There is an awkward silence. Harsh and tireless
> Choirs of cicadas make a shattering din.
> Madame is restless, crosses to the wireless,

Twiddles the knobs, and gets, at last, Berlin.
Meine Entscheidung hab' ich jetzt getroffen
Die Polen auszrotten. Then *Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!*
Did I hear right? Or am I *ganz besoffen*?
This to the Reichstag … Well, it's done in style.

We do not speak, nor look at one another;
Between us now a deep cold gulph has sprung.
My hosts are German … It is hard to smother
Excited words that throng upon the tongue …
Now I am calm, and contemplate a glaucous
Columnar cypress by the garden fence.
I hardly hear the individual raucous
Shouts of the Fuehrer, but I know the sense.

My hostess says, *Gott sie Dank! Du bist Schotte.*
Du bist hein Feind. Technically not so,
In view of 1707, I thought. But not a
Symptom of contradiction did I show.
Vous allez revenir après la guerre,
They said, and beamed, but with a hopeless look.
En peu de temps, I answered, *je l'espere*,
And wrote in Doric in their visitor's book … (Young, 1947, pp. 26–7)

While some of Young's writing only makes a footnote of the threat of Hitler in comparison to the threat of English government, we hear Young say "I hardly hear the individual raucous / shouts of the Fuehrer". As the German language becomes associated with Hitler, crazed drunkenness and the coming war, Young and his hosts switch to speaking in French. It is as if here a change in language offers temporary refuge, and is in-keeping with the politically charged nature of Young's use of Lallans. However, the poem ends with Young writing a comment in his hosts' visitor's book in Ancient Greek, tacitly suggesting a return to civilisation, or a civilised way of life that is under threat or dying in the face of barbarism. Timothy Neat sees this sort of behaviour as proof of Young's "self-parading intellectualism" (Neat, 2009, p. 60). It is a streak in his work which prevents it from fully speaking out and connecting with others in the way perhaps Hamish Henderson's *Elegies for the Dead in Cyrenaica* did. That poem was criticised by Young for being "rather journalistic than poetic" and "in a poetical prose akin to much contemporary journalism" (Neat, 2009, p. 356). The major issue Young seems to have taken with Henderson's poetry is the documentary nature of aspects of it, how it tries in places to capture a sense of what it was like to be there, in North Africa. Young's own poetry, by contrast, sacrifices detail and the

immediacy of combat for the sake of emotive polemics and always points towards, or yearns for, a better ground to stand on.

Young wrote prolifically and propagandistically for a wide audience and this reached its peak during the war. His poetry is a major strand of his overall political campaign for change and for self-government. He saw the poetry of the Scottish Literary Renaissance as taking a key position in any post-War programme of reform or socio-political change. More than his political writings, Young's poetry offered him time for reflection and has led to less problematic and intemperate pronouncements. Young's struggle is a national one, often taken to the symbolic heights of a martyr, a dramatic performance he saw as increasingly necessary in the volume and urgency of his cause. However, Young did not suffer the martyr's fate of a sudden and dramatic end, and in fact lived on, moving from political irrelevance to teaching classics in America. While many of his combatant contemporaries found similar roles as teachers and educational reformers, it is Young who moved to a different continent. This seems to have been a symbolic act of leaving a Scotland whose course did not change in Young's favour, and his exile shows the depth of his commitment to an independent post-War Scotland as well as his simultaneous acknowledgement of it as an unattainable ideal.

Many of Young's both pacifist and combatant friends came to similar conclusions that the post-War assets of peace they had been fighting for lay in education, societal betterment and personal poetic self-improvement and projection of voice. Young's work stands apart by being continually and rhetorically aimed at an increasingly questioning audience, an audience that immediately after the war was no longer as interested in words, as it was in the deeds of reconstruction or recovery. Young's work kept alive the notion of the "enemy" which poets like Henderson and MacLean had problematized, questioned and, to certain extents surpassed, through their wartime work in poetry and folksong.

Although Young's position was an embattled and occasionally unpopular one, his contemporaries—with their belief in a creatively free and plural Scotland—supported his stand. Like his poetic coevals, Young was horrified by the rise of Fascism and what this meant to civilisation. He viewed his poetry as a means of articulating some of the great social ideals of peace and the defeat of tyranny. However, his method was not to look from a military frontline, but from prison in Scotland where he saw his freedom of speech and liberty being put under threat as well. With this in mind he re-opened the old racial wounds of "the auld enemy" of England in his work, even if he cannot be described simply as an Anglophobe for using this emotive touchstone. The use of England as "Other" in Young's work means that, while desiring peace as much as his fellow

Scottish poets, he was willing to pursue his programme of political overhaul through faction and fraction where others of his time were seeking unity and solidarity. There were other Scottish intellectuals who felt the same as Young during World War Two and saw the problem lying in Westminster, so his stand and creative reaction is not an aberrant one, but in fact a profound act of faith, sacrifice and idealism that pervades all his life, actions and work.

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